

**BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE  
SCHOOLS FORUM  
23 October 2020**

The meeting commenced at 9.00am and concluded at 11.00am.

Present:

**Maintained – Secondary**

David Newman – Director of Finance and Operations, Poole High School.

**Maintained – Primary**

Bridget Hinks – Chair of Governors, St. Joseph's Primary School

**Mainstream Academies – Primary**

Dave Simpson – Headteacher, The Epiphany School  
Substitute attended in place of Jon Chapple – Headteacher, Twynham Primary  
Jeremy Payne – Principal, St James' CE School  
Sean Preston – Chief Financial Officer, Hamwic  
Kate Carter – CEO, TEACH Academy Trust

**Mainstream Academies – Secondary**

Andy Baker – Headteacher, Poole Grammar School  
Patrick Earnshaw – Headteacher, Highcliffe School  
Mark Avoth – Headteacher, Bourne Academy  
Nadine Lapskas - Principal, Leaf Studio  
Dorian Lewis – Headteacher, Bournemouth School

**All-Through Academies**

Ben Doyle – Headteacher, St Peter's School

**AP Academy**

Russell Arnold - Headteacher, The Quay School

**Maintained – Special**

Chair - Geoff Cherrill - Head Teacher, Winchelsea School

**Academies – Special**

Sian Thomas – CEO, Ambitions Academy Trust on behalf of Michael Reid – Finance Director - Ambitions Academy Trust

**Early Years Representative**

Sue Johnson – Jack in the Box, Bournemouth  
Linda Duly – Cuddles Day Nursery

### **14-19 Representative**

Andrew Reeks – Bournemouth & Poole College, 14-19 Representative

### **Invited Attendees**

Julian Radcliffe – Service Director – Inclusion & Family Services, BCP Council  
Nicola Webb – Assistant Chief Finance Officer, BCP Council  
Neil Goddard, - Service Director – Quality and Commissioning  
Jack Cutler – Planning and Statistics Officer, BCP Council

### **Invited Elected Members**

Councillor Sandra Moore – Portfolio Holder for Children and Families  
Councillor David Brown – Portfolio Holder for Finance

Not Present:

Elaine Redding – Interim Corporate Director – Children’s Services, BCP Council  
Lauren Dean – Principal, King’s Park Academy  
Angela Malanczuk – Principal and Chair of PSA, Stanley Green Infant School  
Phillip Gavin – Headteacher, Christchurch Learning Centre

#### 1. **INTRODUCTION**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

#### 2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

#### 3. **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

#### 4. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th July 2020, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, signed and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

It was noted that all other matters arising are covered in the agenda.

#### 5. **DSG Budget monitoring 2020-21**

Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Finance Officer, BCP Council, presented the report.

This item was presented as a usual budget monitoring report. The report noted that to date, the high needs spend is on budget. However, the budget does have a £6m funding gap built in to it and this should be noted.

The report noted that overall, in January the set budget had not allocated £1m from the school block mainly from allocated growth funding that offsets the £6m gap on high needs to give a budgeted DSG funding gap of £5m. The DSG had some funding adjustments, from finalising the 2019-20 early years block based on the January 2020 census FTE count. There were also adjustments to the high needs block based on the import/ export adjustment. Those have delivered some small underspend reducing the overall DSG gap to £4.7m.

Expenditure is broadly on track, while adjustments to funding delivered the small change shown in Table 1 and the appendix of the report.

There is potentially a small underspend on the growth fund but the October 2020 census pupil count is not available to confirm this.

**RESOLVED that the report was noted.**

6. DSG Settlement for 2021-22

Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Finance Officer, BCP Council, presented the report.

A summary of the report was provided.

Attention was drawn to the Executive Summary of the report, noting the teachers' pension payments have been rolled into the DSG National Funding Formula and there will not be separate grants coming through next year.

The mainstream schools funding for BCP has increased approximately 3.6% based on the NFF, and on pupil numbers from last October. The funding will change based on pupil numbers. The school level data in school budgets will be based on October 2020 but at moment modelling on schools' data is from last year.

It was noted that primary schools in receipt of the minimum funding per pupil funding levels have seen quite significant increases in funding this year compared with last year which to some extent explains the level of increase.

High needs funded has experienced broadly the same level of increase as last year. Teacher's pay and pensions have also been rolled into funding for high needs. It is expected that special schools that will have also received this grant in 2020/21 will receive the funding through the High Needs Block. The underlying funding increase is approximately 8%.

The Central schools services block has been reduced as signalled last year, by 2.5% for the main council services, and 20% for historical commitments but restoration of the full commitment funding may be possible again for 2021/22.

**RESOLVED that the report was noted.**

**7. High Needs Financial Strategy Report**

Julian Radcliffe, Director for Inclusion and Families, BCP Council, presented the report.

It was noted the High needs recovery plan has 25 action points to deliver, and that it will in equal measure secure improvements for young people in SEND and costs by association as well. The plan is robustly governed and monitored and reports into the Chief Executive and Cabinet, and the Section 151 Officer. Appendix A (p23) of the report was referred to, highlighting a series of actions that will impact the High Needs block.

JR noted Covid has had an impact on some of the deliverable, but it is expected that these will become more apparent once the pandemic eases.

Neil Goddard presented the remainder of the report.

The table that was provided for the school's forum for last year that demonstrated the ongoing pressure on the higher needs block. £4.8m to £16.9m over a number of years. This is linked to the recovery plan and is shared with the DfE who have oversight of our move back to a balanced position. We met with the DfE at the start of the year to go through the plan which they were positive about.

BCP high needs deficit is around 20% compared with up to 60% in other areas of the South West.

Last year we added a £1m deficit to that brought forward into BCP of £3.6 million so we have brought into this year a deficit of £4.6m. We have managed to keep in line with the budget that Nicola had set so is a positive for this year at this stage.

The forecast for next year was £11.8m is now just under £4m. Under considerable pressure to balance the budget overall and as Julian stated some of the initiatives have been delayed because of Covid, so that estimate may reduce further as we see the true impact of them coming through and as we continue to deliver more savings generally.

Our target is to move that figure to a balanced budget next year and the position at the moment is that it is just under £4m but is still a significant reduction from the £11.8m originally calculated last year.

NG stated that there are more SEND capital projects to come onstream, that work at the BLC is underway, with a view to be online early April in next financial year. There is also the Winchelsea satellite project at Somerford Primary School in Christchurch planned to come online in September next year to increase capacity. The purpose is to take pupils away from high cost out of borough placements to give them a high-quality education, locally at reduced costs. Parents have been very supportive and patient.

ST queried the AP strategy, referencing the paperwork that mentions different areas of places: one identified in Bournemouth the other is in Poole but has not been identified where. JR responded that the location of the Poole site could not yet be shared publicly but would be in due course.

The Chair commented that he thought it would be beneficial for the forum noting a couple of things. As Sean had alluded to, there has clearly been a significant amount of work and the impact is a significant reduction in the deficit. It should still be noted that there is still a deficit but that there seems to be progress being made within the High Needs strategy.

It was also acknowledged that both JR and NG were expecting to see most of the impact of those pieces of work over the next two or three years.

The Chair also added that, from a personal perspective it should be noted that despite Covid a huge amount of work has continued and moved forward.

**RESOLVED that the report was noted.**

8. Mainstream Schools Funding Formula

Jack Cutler, Quality and Commissioning, BCP Council, presented the report.

It was noted there are no significant formula changes compared with 2020/21. Schools continue to be considered as falling in to 3 categories: Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG), formula and Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level (MPPFL) schools.

The report presented two scenarios; one where all schools received the National Funding Formula (NFF) level of funding for 2021/22, and another where MFG and formula schools continued to a 0.5% release of funding out of NFF to facilitate a transfer to the HN's block.

MA questioned whether the LA applied for a 0.5% transfer last year, and it was confirmed this had been the case.

SP questioned whether it was reasonable to consider again for 2021/22 all schools contributing to any transfer, including those on the MPPFL's.

It was agreed by the Chair that the schools funding consultation should also consider a scenario where all schools contributed to a 0.5% transfer through releasing funds from NFF. A vote was taken on this that received unanimous support.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted, and that the schools funding consultation document would consider an additional alternative approach to releasing 0.5% from NFF where all schools contributed to this.**

9. Growth Fund 2021/22

Jack Cutler, Quality and Commissioning, BCP Council, presented the report.

The report noted that the proposal for the 2021/22 growth policy was a continuation of the 2020/21 policy.

The estimated cost to the growth fund under this policy for 2021/22 was provided within the report.

JC confirmed that at the next Schools Forum meeting it will be confirmed whether Livingstone Academy will be opening places from Sep 2021 and as such require growth funding.

It was agreed to revisit the policy at the January Schools Forum meeting, when there was more certainty around funding for 2021/22.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

#### 10. FORWARD PLAN

### **BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH and POOLE SCHOOLS FORUM**

#### **Forward Plan**

##### **8<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

- Early Years Formula Consultation Outcome
- Mainstream Schools Formula Consultation Outcome
- Special School EHCP Banding Review Progress
- High Needs Financial Strategy Report
- Maintained Schools Central Retention 2021-22
- Central School Services Budget 2021-22

##### **14<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

- DSG Budget Monitoring 2020-21
- DSG Settlement and Budget 2021-22
- Growth Fund 2021-22
- Mainstream Schools Formula 2021-22 and Funding Transfers from Schools Block 2021-22
- Early Years Funding Formula 2021-22
- Looked After Children Pupil Premium Arrangements 2021-22

##### **June 2021**

- DSG Outturn 2020-21
- High Needs Financial Strategy Report
- Reconstitution of Schools Forum
- Scheme of Financing Maintained Schools (if update is required)
- Special School EHCP Banding Review Proposal

**Future dates to be confirmed.**

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Tuesday 8th December 2020
- Thursday 14th January 2021
- June 2021 tbc

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair requested feedback as to how vacancies on the Forum should be filled, particularly around whether it was appropriate to replace a member with a colleague from their school, or if the sector group represented should re-nominate a replacement. This discussion was to be taken forward outside the Schools Forum meeting.

The Chair thanked all the members for their valued contribution to the discussion.

**Chairman**